



For Immediate Release

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Mazuma Credit Union's Big Idea Is Big Reward for Local Entrepreneur

(KANSAS CITY, MO., July 7, 2008) – Shila Poindexter is ready to put on her entrepreneurial shoes. Poindexter is one of millions of professionals who is ready to leave her day job, but isn't ready to retire.

Poindexter's experience in the health care industry encouraged her to start a home health assisted-living company.

To get her business moving, Poindexter entered and won Mazuma Credit Union's "What's the Big Idea Challenge."

The Challenge, part of Filene Research Institute's i³ pilot program designed to reach those with an entrepreneurial spirit, rewarded Poindexter with a \$3,000 marketing package to help her launch her new business. The package includes logo and stationery design, and stationery printing costs. The prize package costs are covered by Mazuma.

The Challenge required entrants to submit business plans describing the nature of their business ideas.

"Shila's submission was well thought-out and received by the judges as a feasible concept," said Ryan Reid, Relationship Architect at Mazuma Credit Union.

The judges for the Challenge were made up of current Mazuma Members who are business owners.

Eric Jones, Mazuma's vice-president, business services, said engaging current business Members in the process helped strengthen the relationships between the Credit Union and those Members. Jones said it also was beneficial to have on the panel Members who have been through the process of forming new businesses.

"It was great to get our Members more involved in what Mazuma is doing and to use their experiences as a resource for other Members," Jones said. "After all, we are a co-operative."

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Lisa Renner, i³ member and president/CEO, CU Holding Company, LLC, an aggregation of Mazuma Credit Union CUSOs said, “‘What’s the Big Idea Challenge’ is an opportunity for credit unions to provide business-friendly services that promise significant rewards in future business deposit and lending services.

“It’s just one tool credit unions can use to attract entrepreneurs and provide services that contribute significantly to the bottom line,” Renner said.

The Challenge also featured an online business evaluator tool. The Big Idea Evaluator used respondents’ answers in three categories (market, management and money) to provide feedback, offer advice and counsel, and suggest resources to help the entrepreneurs create successful new business ventures.

Poindexter said the Big Idea Evaluator was very helpful in outlining her commitment to creating a new business.

As far as collecting her winnings and launching her home health assisted-living company, Poindexter said, “I’m excited! I’ve always wanted to own my own business. There’s a lot of dedication and time involved, and I’m ready to dig in.”

About Mazuma Credit Union

Established in 1948, Mazuma Credit Union serves more than 51,000 Members and has more than \$300 million in assets. Mazuma is open to membership for those living or working in Jackson and Clay Counties in Missouri. For more information about the Credit Union that’s “all about you,” visit Mazuma’s Web site at www.mazuma.org, or contact Christy Bourne, Beyond Marketing, at cbourne@beyondmarketingllc.com.

About Filene i³

Filene i³ is partially underwritten by a grant from the Corporate Credit Union Network. The nonprofit Filene Research Institute examines vital issues affecting the future of credit unions and consumer finance through unbiased research and innovation programs. The Institute collaborates with leading researchers and academic institutions worldwide. Credit unions, credit union organizations, and credit union executives financially support the credit union industry think and do tank. To learn more about the Filene Research Institute visit www.filene.org.

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(A photo of the ‘What’s the Big Idea Challenge’ winner, Shila Poindexter, is available upon request.)